



No. 256 Rs. 3.00

# Sakhi Sarwar

A FOLKTALE FROM PUNJAB



The folktales of a country reflect the spirit of its rural life. They are simple but yet not entirely devoid of art.

For dramatic effect, the bards who sing the folktales often turn history and geography upside down. Two kings who lived two hundred years apart become contemporaries and are made blood brothers. A well-known bridge across one river is shifted to a completely different stream.

The folktales of the Punjab, including the regions now in Pakistan, also have this interesting aspect—a delightful blend of Hindu-Muslim traditions. A Muslim governor sends a wedding proposal through a Brahmana; a Hindu saint invokes God with the word 'Rab'; a Muslim bride wears the vermillion powder on her forehead—an essentially Hindu custom.

Darkness has fallen. As the moon rises silently over the Indus and the Ravi, over the huts and the fields of long-eared wheat, the peasants gather round the bard. The bard tunes his instrument and begins to sing...

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# SAKHI SARWAR



ABOUT TWELVE MILES FROM MULTAN LIES THE VILLAGE OF GARN KOT. HERE LIVED SAYYID AHMED, OR SAKHI SARWAR, WITH HIS MOTHER, HIS FATHER AND HIS THREE STEP-BROTHERS. PIOUS AND GENEROUS, HE WAS CONSIDERED A SAINT.



SO THERE YOU ARE. I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU. DON'T YOU KNOW IT IS EVENING?



EVENING? FORGIVE ME, MOTHER. I WAS READING.

THE SHEEP ARE ABOUT TO GO TO SLEEP AND YOU ARE STILL READING.



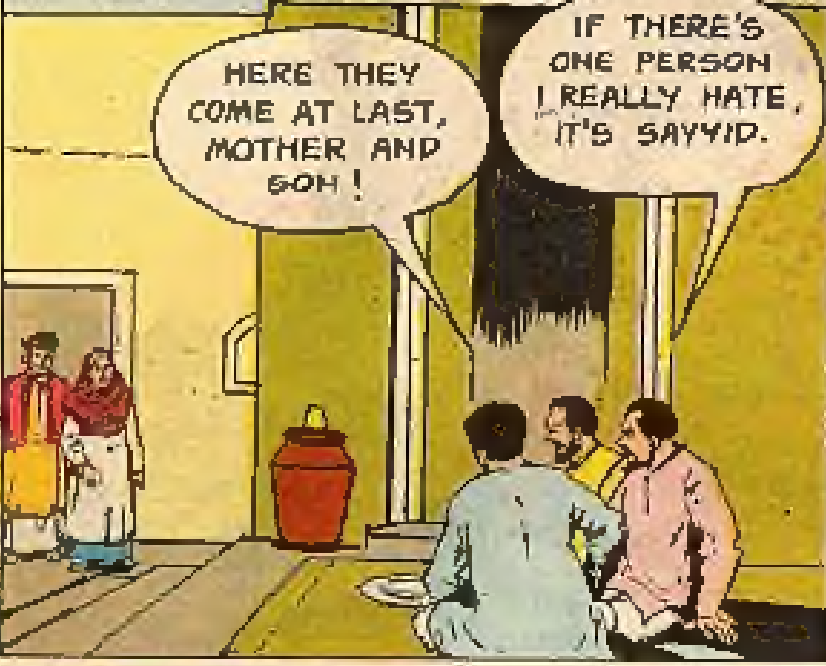
THE HOLY QURAN ASSORBS ME COMPLETELY, MOTHER. IT IS GOD'S WORD. I BOW TO HIM.

MAY ALLAH BLESS YOU, FOR YOUR DEVOTION. COME, LET'S GO HOME.



ARRRR...  
RRRR...

AT HOME —



HERE THEY  
COME AT LAST,  
MOTHER AND  
SON!

IF THERE'S  
ONE PERSON  
I REALLY HATE,  
IT'S SAYYID.



PLEASE FORGIVE ME.  
I WISH YOU HADN'T  
WAITED FOR ME.

EAT, MY SONS.  
I'LL SERVE YOU.



NO, MOTHER, THAT'S  
ENOUGH FOR ME. MY  
BROTHERS HAVE  
HEALTHY APPETITES.  
LET THEM HAVE  
MORE.



THAT'S FINE  
BY US.

IF HE WANTS  
TO STARVE,  
LET HIM  
STARVE.

ONE DAY —



OH, SAYYID, YOUR  
GRANDFATHER IS DEAD.  
O WOEFUL DAY THAT  
TOOK MY BELOVED  
FATHER FROM ME.

DO NOT WEEP,  
MOTHER. IT IS TO  
ALLAH'S KINGDOM  
HE HAS GONE.

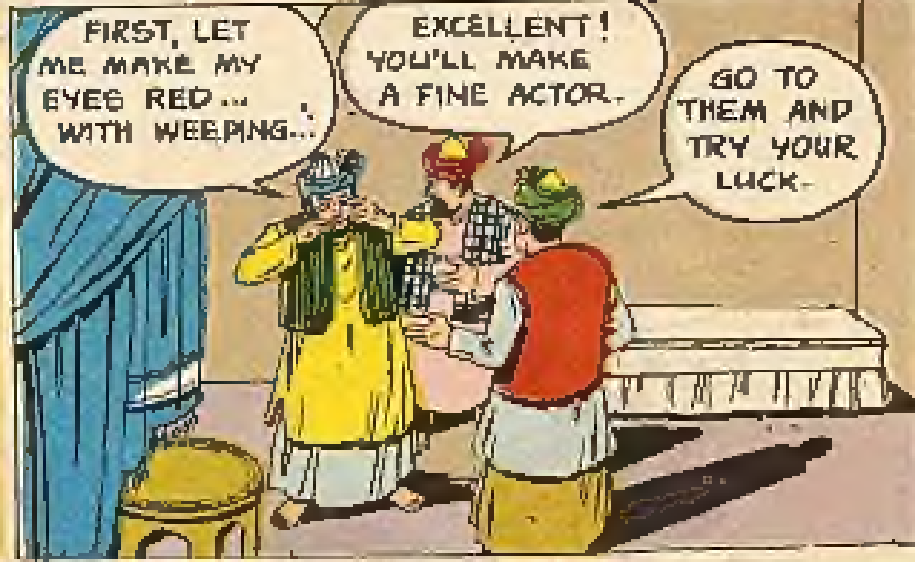


SO SAYYID'S RICH GRANDFATHER IS DEAD! GOOD! IS THERE ANYTHING IN IT FOR US?

FOR US? IT'S HIS MOTHER'S FATHER WHO IS DEAD, NOT OURS! WE HAVE NO RIGHT TO ANYTHING. DO WE?



SAYYID IS A FOOL. I DON'T MIND BECOMING RICH AT HIS EXPENSE!



FIRST, LET ME MAKE MY EYES RED... WITH WEeping...

EXCELLENT! YOU'LL MAKE A FINE ACTOR.

GO TO THEM AND TRY YOUR LUCK.



SAYYID, MOTHER ...WHAT A SAD DAY THIS IS...MY HEART BREAKS WITH SORROW....



BUT WHAT MAKES ME EVEN SADDER IS THAT SAYYID WILL SOON BE FAR FROM US...

I? FAR FROM YOU, MY DEAR BROTHER...?

YOU WILL NOW OWN  
YOUR GRANDFATHER'S  
VAST LANDS AND... YOU  
WILL FORGET YOUR POOR  
BROTHERS WHO LOVE  
YOU SO MUCH.

HOW CAN YOU  
SAY SUCH A  
THING? ALL THAT  
IS MINE IS YOURS.

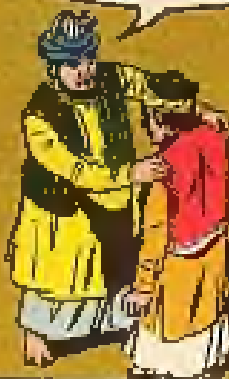
AHA! I'VE  
GOT HIM!



YOU WERE ALWAYS GENEROUS,  
SAYYID. I KNOW YOU WILL  
SHARE YOUR PROSPERITY WITH  
US. BUT YOU KNOW SO LITTLE  
ABOUT THESE THINGS... IF... IF  
YOU LET ME DIVIDE  
THE LAND...

CERTAINLY! TAKE IT  
ALL. YOU DO THE  
ALLOTING. I KNOW  
I CAN TRUST YOU.

MAY YOU LIVE  
LONG! MAY ALLAH  
ALWAYS PROTECT  
YOU!



SOON —

I AM THE  
ELDEST, THIS  
PLOT IS MINE!

NO, IT'S  
MINE...

I CHOSE  
IT FIRST!



BROTHERS,  
BROTHERS! LET'S  
NOT QUARREL! WE  
HAVE CHOSEN THE MOST  
BARREN STRIP OF LAND  
FOR SAYYID. DOESN'T  
THAT SATISFY YOU?

OH, YES,  
YES...

WE'LL BE  
HAPPY WITH  
OUR SHARE.

A LITTLE LATER —

HAVE YOU  
DIVIDED  
THE LAND,  
MY BROTHER?

YES, SAYYID.  
THAT BEAUTI-  
FUL PLOT  
THERE IS  
FOR YOU.

YOU SEEM TO  
HAVE GIVEN ME A  
VERY FERTILE STRIP.  
I HOPE YOU HAVE  
BEEN FAIR TO  
YOURSELVES.

THE FOOL  
DOESN'T KNOW  
A THING ABOUT  
AGRICULTURE!

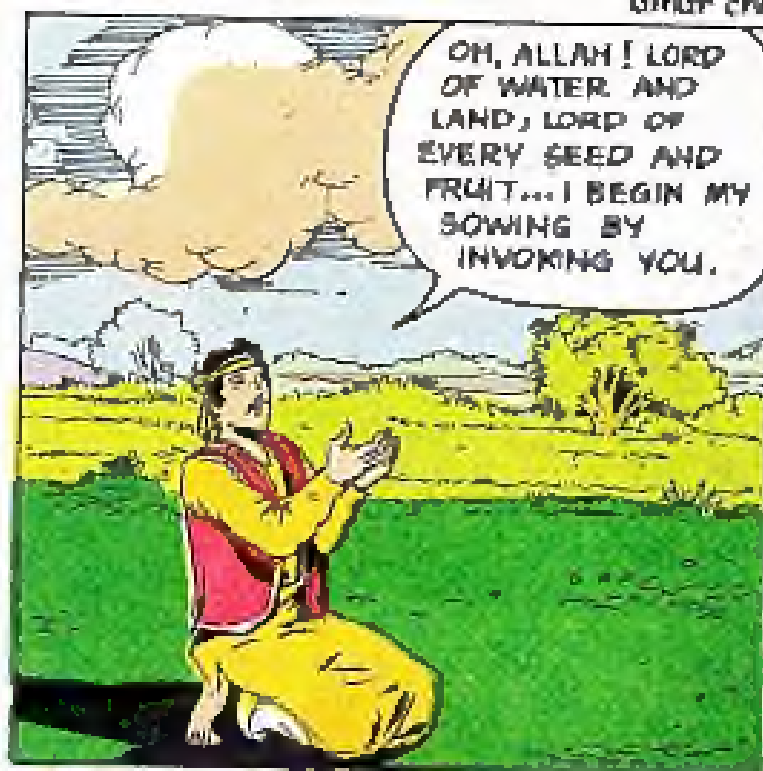
IN THE SOWING SEASON —

THERE'S SAYYID,  
PRAYING AS USUAL!  
PRAY AWAY, STEP-BROTHER.  
YOU WILL BE LUCKY  
IF YOU GET EVEN A  
HARVEST OF THORNS.

HA, HA,  
HA!

HO, HO,  
HO!



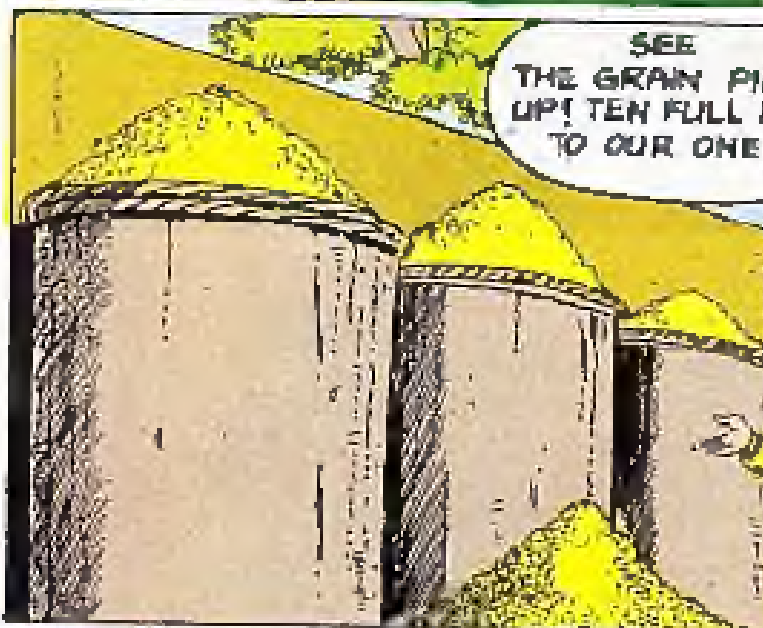


OH, ALLAH! LORD OF WATER AND LAND, LORD OF EVERY SEED AND FRUIT... I BEGIN MY SOWING BY INVOKING YOU.



AND AS THE RAIN AND THE SUN RIPENED THE CROPS—

LOOK AT SAYYID'S PLOT. I... I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!



SEE THE GRAIN PILED UP! TEN FULL BINS TO OUR ONE!

IT'S YOUR FAULT...

YOU ALLOTTED THE LAND...



WAIT!... I GOT THE LAND FROM SAYYID, DIDN'T I? WHAT'S GOING TO STOP ME FROM GETTING HIS GRAIN NOW... AND RUINING HIM ONCE AND FOR ALL?



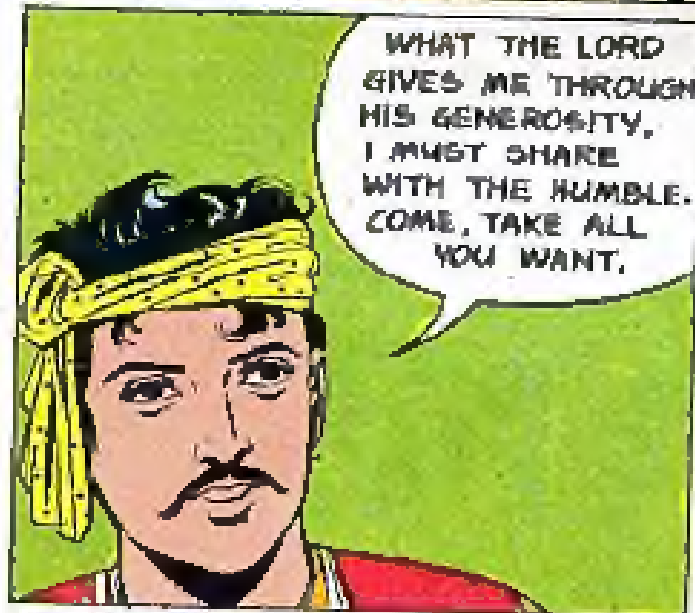
SOON —

SAYYID, WE ARE LOST! OH, WE ARE LOST! OUR CROP WAS A FAILURE...

WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO SHOW OUR FACES IN THE TOWN.







FRIENDS SAYHI  
SAYYID'S GRAIN IS  
EXHAUSTED YOU MAY  
ALL LEAVE

WHAT A BRILLIANT  
IDEA THAT WAS I  
SAYYID IS SOON GOING TO  
BE IN TROUBLE

HE  
WILL HAVE TO  
RUN AWAY OR  
ROT IN PRISON

A FEW DAYS LATER

WE HAVE ALMOST  
REACHED MULHAN

AND LOOK AT  
SAYYID, RIDING  
ALONG SO INNOCENTLY.  
LET'S BREAK IT TO  
HIM NOW.

EE SAYYID, I HOPE  
YOU HAVE BRUGHT  
ENOUGH MONEY  
WITH YOU.

WHAT  
FOR,  
BROTHER?

MY DEAR FELLOW (XD)  
YOU THINK WE ARE GOING  
TO MULHAN FOR FUN? YOU  
WILL HAVE TO PAY THE  
GOVERNMENT WIND TAX &  
PART OF THE EARNINGS  
FROM YOUR HARVEST

BUT  
DIDN'T KNOW  
THERE WAS  
SUCH A LAW  
I HAVE NOTHING  
WITH ME



THEN YOU MUST  
TAKE YOUR CHANCE.  
THE GOVERNOR  
MAY REMIT YOUR  
SHARE

OR, ON THE  
OTHER HAND, HE  
MAY PUNISH YOU  
SEVERELY. WHO  
KNOWS?

OH GOD! I'M  
THINKING OF YOU ALL  
THE TIME, I HAVE  
LEARN'T NOTHING OF  
PRACTICAL THINGS.  
WHAT WILL HAPPEN  
TO ME NOW?



AND SUDDENLY

DO YOU SEE  
THOSE PEOPLE?  
WHERE DID THEY  
SPRING FROM?

MORE AND MORE ARE  
JOINING THEM AND THEY  
ALL SEEM TO BE  
FOLLOWING SAYYID



THIS IS  
RIDICULOUS! THEY  
HAVE BLOCKED  
THE STREETS!

I FEEL SUFFOCATED!  
CAN'T BREATHE!



MEANWHILE, AT THE HOUSE OF GHANU,  
THE GOVERNOR OF MULTAN --

WHAT'S GOING  
ON DOWN  
THERE?

I'VE NEVER  
SEEN SUCH  
A THROG  
BEFORE

GO --GO  
QUICKLY I SEE  
WHAT'S HAPPENING--  
ALERT OUR  
ARMY...

HALT! WHO ARE  
YOU? WHAT IS  
YOUR BUSINESS  
IN THIS CITY?

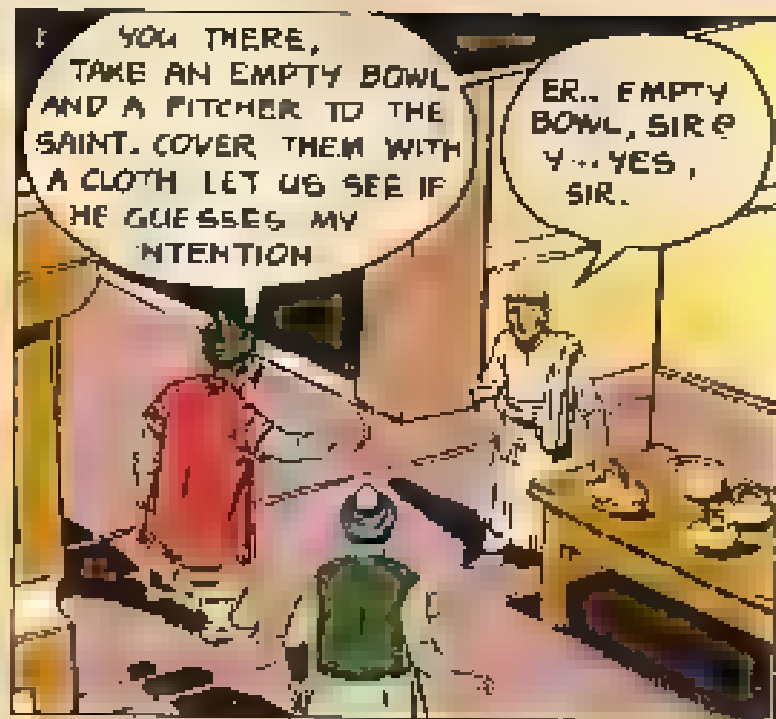
SIR, WE ARE  
FOLLOWERS OF THIS  
SAINT, SAKHI SARWAR.

HE MUST BE A  
TRULY GREAT SAINT  
TO HAVE SUCH A  
MULTITUDE OF  
FOLLOWERS

SIR, SIR YOU  
WON'T NEED YOUR  
SWORD. IT'S ONLY  
A SAINT WHO IS  
VISITING MULTAN  
WITH HIS  
FOLLOWERS



OHO! A SAINT,  
IS HE? LET ME  
TEST THE POWERS  
OF THIS MAN  
OF GOD



YOU THERE,  
TAKE AN EMPTY BOWL  
AND A PITCHER TO THE  
SAINT. COVER THEM WITH  
A CLOTH LET US SEE IF  
HE GUESSES MY  
INTENTION

ER.. EMPTY  
BOWL, SIR?  
Y.. YES,  
SIR.



THIS WILL SEEM  
LIKE AN INSULT TO THE  
SAINT. HE MIGHT EVEN  
BE ANGRY WITH ME,  
BELIEVING THIS TO  
BE MY OFFERING



OH GOD, I AM A  
POOR, HUMBLE  
SERVANT. PROTECT  
ME... HELP ME

I WILL  
SECRETLY  
WATCH  
THEM



O S . SAINT, THIS HAS BEEN  
SENT TO YOU WITH THE  
RESPECTS OF GHANU,  
GOVERNOR OF MULTAN.

THAT IS  
KIND OF  
HIM



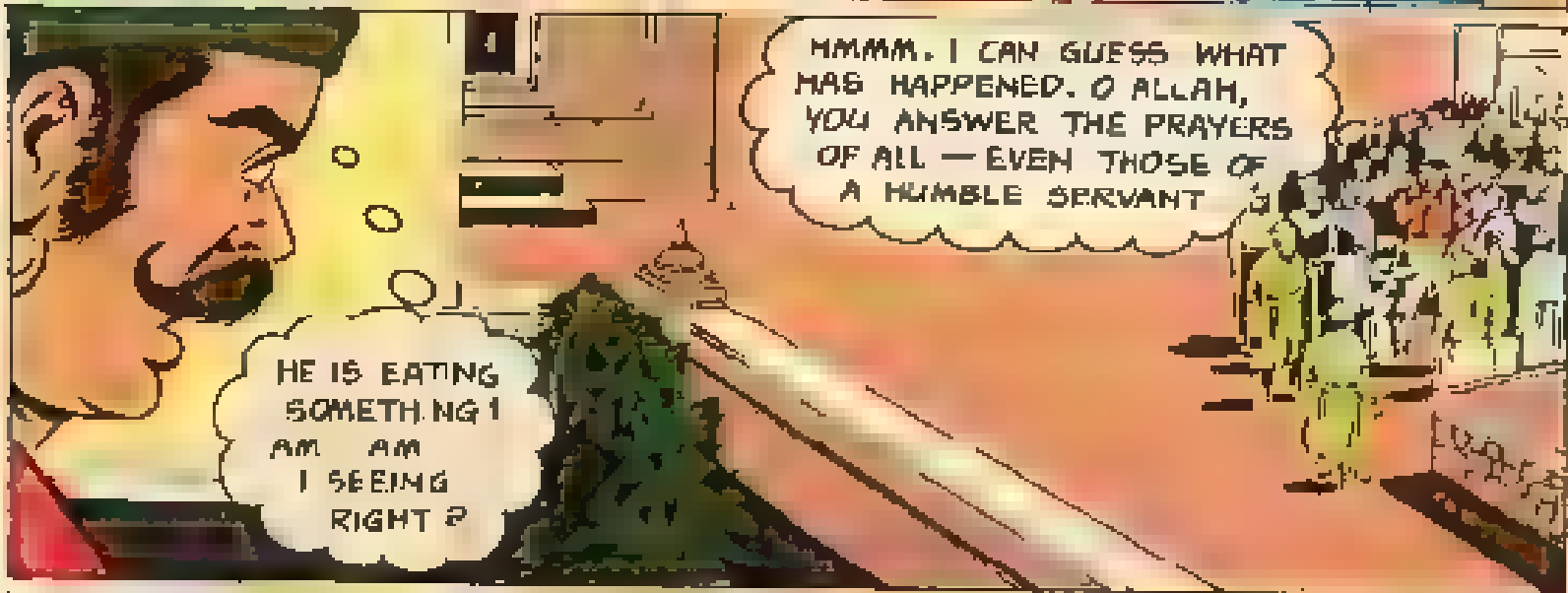
WH WHAT'S  
THIS P!

AH! REFRESHING  
RICE AND MILK AND  
CLEAR, COOL WATER!  
I WILL HAVE A LITTLE.  
TAKE BACK THE  
REST



MMMM. I CAN GUESS WHAT  
HAS HAPPENED. O ALLAH,  
YOU ANSWER THE PRAYERS  
OF ALL — EVEN THOSE OF  
A HUMBLE SERVANT

HE IS EATING  
SOMETHING I  
AM AM  
I SEEING  
RIGHT P



SOON

HERE, S R  
THE SAINT HAS  
SENT THIS  
BACK

THE EMPTY  
VESSELS ARE  
FILLED TO THE BRIM  
HE IS INDEED  
A TRUE SAINT!



GO—INVITE THE  
NOBLE ONE INTO  
THE HOUSE

O SAINT ACCEPT FROM ME  
THIS PURSE OF A LAKH AND  
A QUARTER RUPEES, A  
HOUSE AND ROBES OF  
HONOUR

I THANK  
YOU SIR



I HAVE LEARNT FROM  
YOUR FOLLOWERS WHY  
YOU CAME HERE. I SUSPECT  
YOUR THREE BROTHERS  
OF TREACHERY.



GUARDS THROW  
THEM INTO PRISON  
AT ONCE!



LATER —

THERE GOES  
THE SAINT  
BACK TO HIS  
HOMETOWN

BUT HE'S TAKING  
THE WRONG ROAD  
HE'S GOING TOWARDS  
THE TOWN PRISON!



O WARDEN, MY BROTHERS ARE HERE IN YOUR PRISON. I REQUEST YOU TO RELEASE THEM

YOU STILL LOVE THEM! IN SPITE OF THEIR WICKEDNESS! I WON'T REFUSE YOU. HERE ARE THE KEYS - RELEASE THE ONES THAT ARE YOUR BROTHERS

ALL OF THEM ARE MY BROTHERS. I WILL NOT MOVE FROM HERE TILL THEY ARE ALL RELEASED.

I HAD BETTER TELL THE GOVERNOR TO COME AND SEE ABOUT THIS HIMSELF

SOON -

YES, WARDEN. LET THEM ALL GO WHEN THE SAINT HIMSELF HAS DEMANDED THEIR RELEASE. WHAT CAN I SAY IF THEY ARE ALL PARDONED





COME HERE, ALL OF  
YOU CALL YOUR OTHER  
FRIENDS TOO

WE ASSURE YOU GREAT  
SANT, EVERY COIN IN THIS  
BAG WILL BE USED TO FEED  
AND CLOTHE THE POOR  
OF THIS TOWN



A LAKH AND  
A QUARTER  
RUPEES

ALL GONE



AND LATER ON THE WAY HOME

LOOK! HUNDREDS  
OF BEDRAGGLED  
FELLOWS! THEY'RE  
COMING THIS WAY!



WHO  
ARE  
YOU?

WE ARE FAKIRS SIR -  
THREE HUNDRED AND  
SIXTY OF US WE HAVE  
JUST BROKEN A TWELVE-  
YEAR LONG FAST NOW  
HUNGER DRIVES US  
TO THE CITY.



TWELVE YEARS!  
NO WONDER  
THEY LOOK LIKE  
RUNAWAY  
SCARECROWS!

THESE ARE  
DEVOUT MEN OF  
GOD. I SEE DIVINE  
HUNGER IN THEIR  
EYES



ALL MY BROTHERS  
EAT THEM, AND  
FOR THE OTHERS  
I'LL SELL THEM IN  
MILTAN FOR FOOD.

AND WHO AM  
I GOING TO  
SELL THEM TO?  
THEY'LL BE  
USELESS TO ME.

YOU ARE BACK  
WHERE YOU STARTED  
SAYYID. YOU HAVE  
PARTED WITH TRULY  
VALUABLE GIFTS

THEY WERE ON  
NEEDED AND  
USELESS TO ME  
THE BROTHERS WILL  
MAKE KNIGHT  
USE OF THEM

AND A THIRTEEN  
DOLLAR FARM  
IN THE



AND A THIRTEEN DOLLAR FARM IN THE

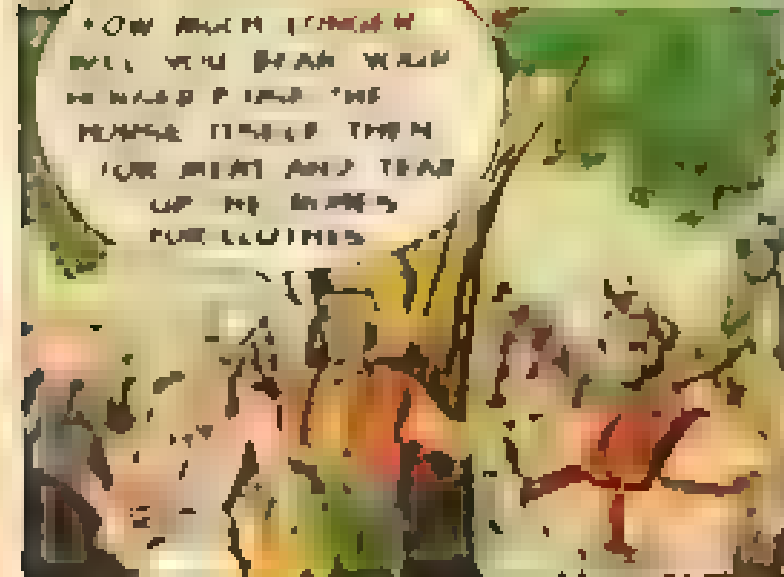
WELL ONE  
HOBLE ONE! STOP!  
TAKE BACK YOUR  
KINGLY GIFTS



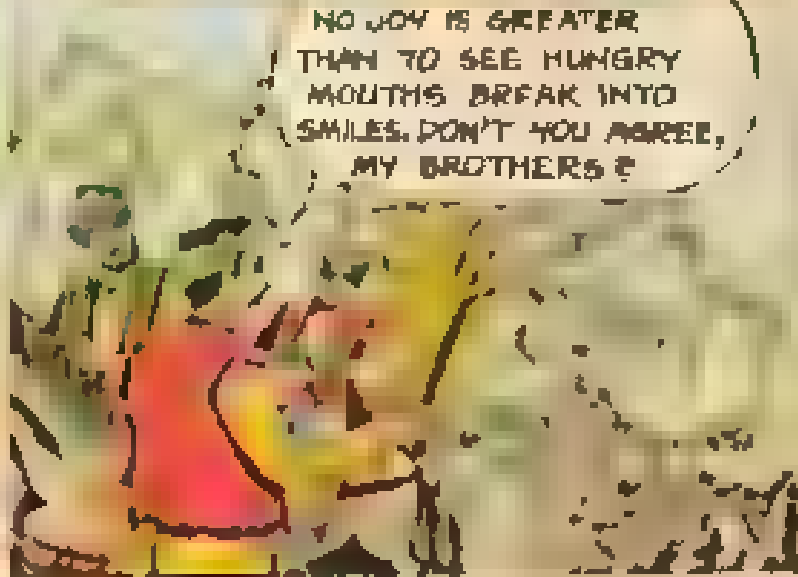
NO ONE IN MILTAN WANTS  
TO BUY THEM FOR THEY  
SAY THEY FEAR THE  
GREATNESS OF THE  
THEM TO YOU.



HOW MUCH LONGER  
WILL YOU BEAR WITH  
ME HAVING THE  
PEOPLE ITSELF THEN  
FOR MEAT AND TEAR  
UP MY BROTHERS  
FOR CLOTHES

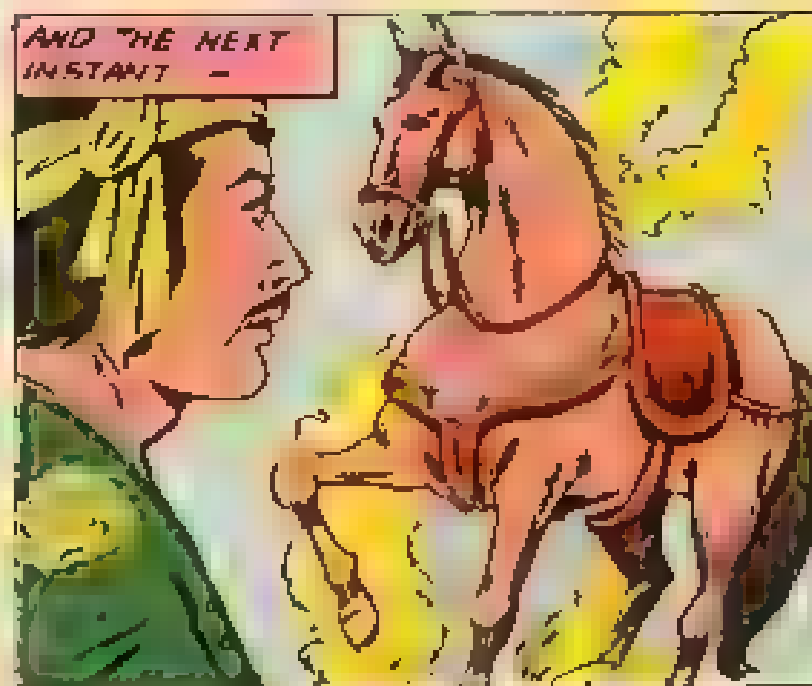
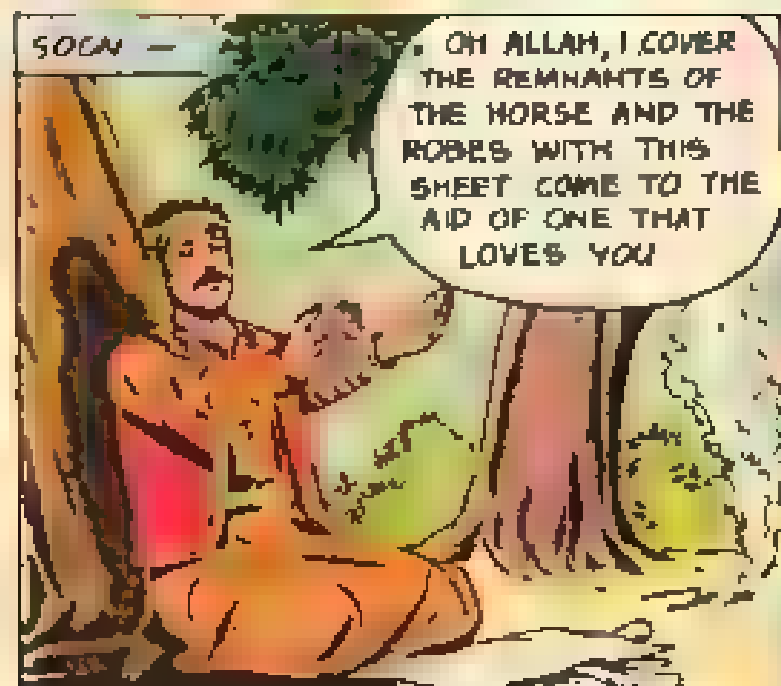
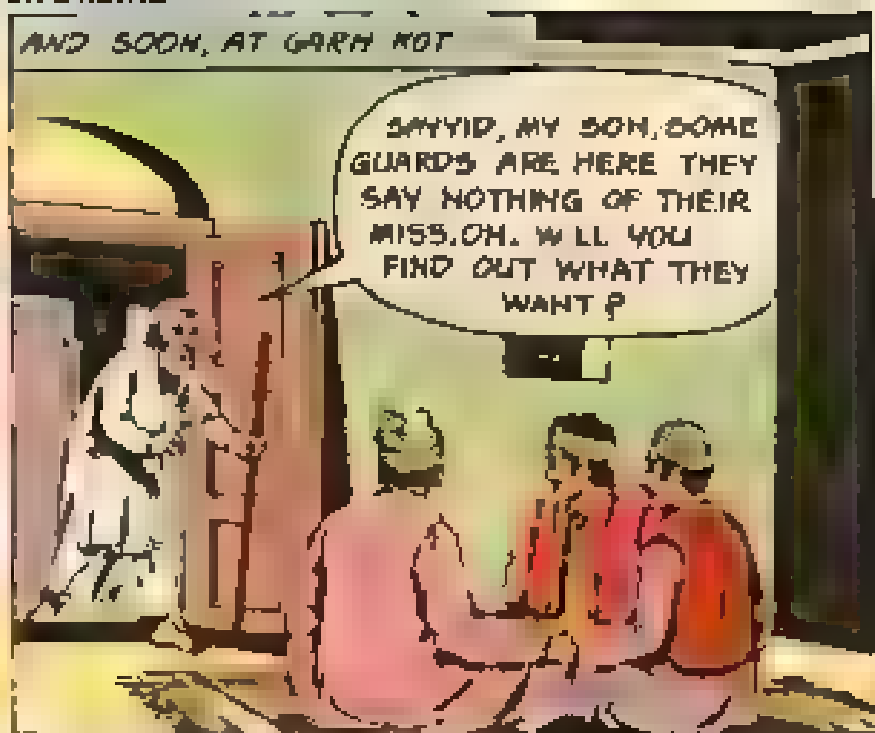


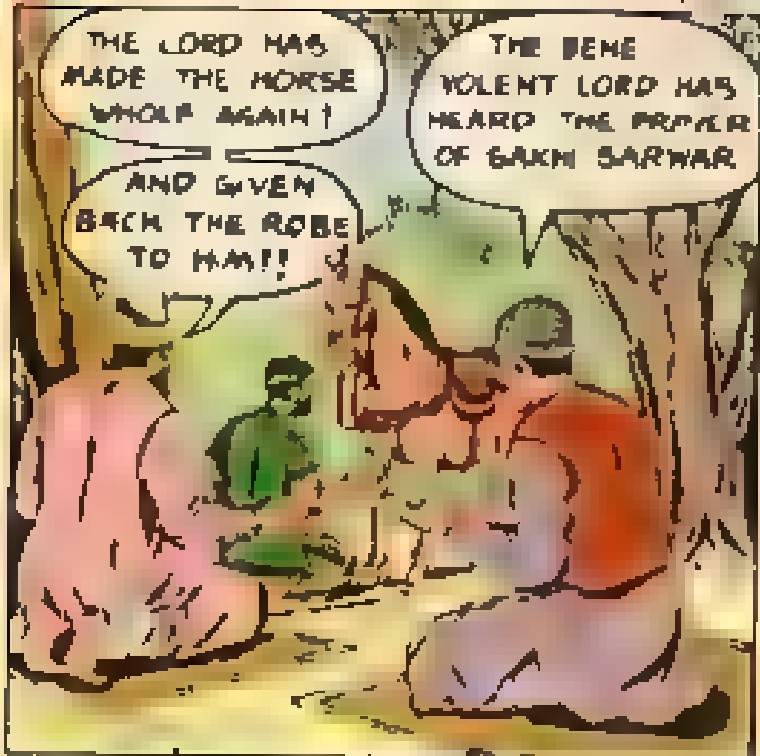
NO JOY IS GREATER  
THAN TO SEE HUNGRY  
MOUTHS BREAK INTO  
SMILES. DON'T YOU AGREE,  
MY BROTHERS?











THE LORD HAS  
MADE THE HORSE  
WHOLE AGAIN!

AND GIVEN  
BACK THE ROBE  
TO HIM!!

THE BENE  
VOLENT LORD HAS  
HEARD THE PRAYER  
OF BAKH SARWAR



COME, LET US  
GO TO MULTAN AND  
RETURN THE GIFTS  
PERSONALLY.



AT MULTAN

OH... NO... IT'S THE SAINT HIMSELF!  
HE... HE RIDES THE SAME HORSE  
AND WEARS THE SAME ROBES... OH!  
THOSE VILLAINOUS BROTHERS! I'LL  
MURDER THEM.. I'LL BOIL THEM  
IN OIL.. I'LL ROAST THEM ON  
A SPIT!



GREAT ONE  
NOBLE ONE . O MOST  
BELOVED OF GOD  
I BEG YOUR  
FORGIVENESS



I HAVE ERRED PROVE  
THAT YOU FORGIVE ME!  
ACCEPT THE HAND OF  
MY DAUGHTER IN  
MARRIAGE, I BESEECH  
YOU!



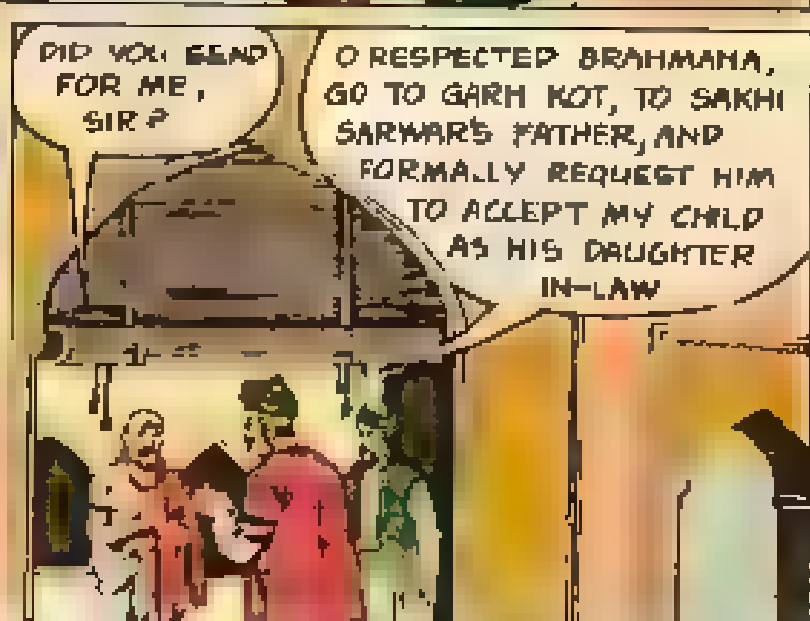
YOUR DAUGHTER HAS GROWN UP IN WEALTH. WHAT CAN I, A POOR FAKIR, OFFER HER? NO. I REFUSE HER HAND. KEEP YOUR HORSE AND ROBES TOO AND GOD BE WITH YOU.

BUT KIND SAINT  
GOOD SAINT  
WAIT



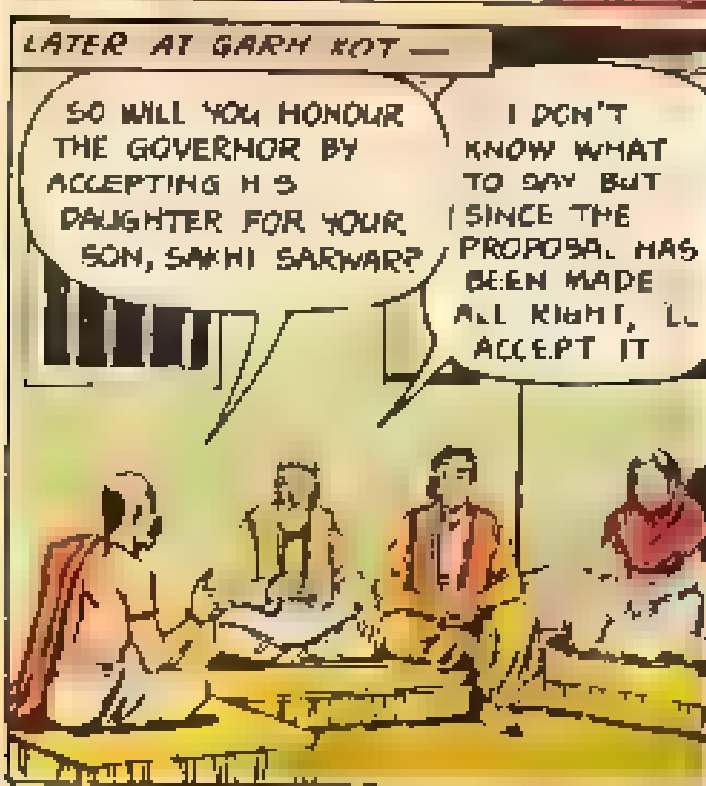
HE'S GONE! BUT I WON'T GIVE UP. SUMMON A BRAHMANA AT ONCE!

YES, SIR



DID YOU SEND FOR ME, SIR?

O RESPECTED BRAHMANA, GO TO GARN KOT, TO SAKHI SARWAR'S FATHER, AND FORMALLY REQUEST HIM TO ACCEPT MY CHILD AS HIS DAUGHTER IN-LAW.



SO WILL YOU HONOUR THE GOVERNOR BY ACCEPTING HIS DAUGHTER FOR YOUR SON, SAKHI SARWAR?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY BUT SINCE THE PROPOSAL HAS BEEN MADE ALL RIGHT, I ACCEPT IT.



WHAT DO YOU SAY, SAKHI D P

IF YOU WANT ME TO MARRY, THEN I AM AGREEABLE.

AND SOON AT GHANU'S -

THE WEDDING  
IS FIXED! AHA! IT  
WILL BE A WEDDING  
THAT NO ONE IN  
MULTAN HAS SEEN  
THE LIKE OF!

INSTRUCT THE  
INNKEEPERS AND  
CONFECTIONERS  
THAT ALL FOOD  
BOUGHT BY ANY-  
ONE IN MULTAN,  
SHOULD BE  
CHARGED TO ME.

THE VERY SAINTS AND GODS  
SHALL ATTEND THE WEDDING.  
SEND OUT INVITATIONS TO ALL,  
EVEN THOSE VILLAINOUS  
BROTHERS! TWENTY FIVE  
THOUSAND SHALL BE FED  
AT THE FEAST.





AND ON THE WEDDING DAY —

HERE COMES THE BRIDEGROOM

I WAS AFRAID THE PROCESSION WOULD CONSIST OF THE SAINT'S RAGGED, FAKIR FRIENDS. BUT SEE, SAKHI SARWAR HAS BROUGHT A DECENT, WELL-DRESSED CROWD. MY PRESTIGE WILL NOT BE LOWERED AFTER ALL

THE HOLY BHAIRON AND THE HOLY HANWANT THEMSELVES ARE PROVIDING THE MUSIC TO USHER THE BRIDEGROOM INTO HIS FATHER-IN-LAW'S CITY

BUT JUST THEN —

ALL IS LOST!  
ALL IS LOST,  
O HONOURED ONE!  
O WOE! O MISFORTUNE!

STOP, FOOL! DON'T USE SUCH INAUSPICIOUS WORDS ON SUCH AN AUSPICIOUS DAY! WHAT IS IT? WHAT IS IT?

OH, WHAT A DAY YOU HAVE CHOSEN FOR THE WEDDING DON'T YOU KNOW? WE ARE IN THE MONTH OF RAMZAAN AND IT IS EKADASHI TODAY

RAMZAAN? EKADASHI? TODAY? OH, NO! NO!

NOW CAN THE MUSSALMANS AND THE HINDUS EAT TODAY?

ALL IS LOST  
-ALL IS LOST  
O WOE!  
O MISFORTUNE!

JUST THEN —

WHAT IS IT,  
O GHANU?  
YOU SEEM  
UPSET

NONE OF THE  
TWENTY-FIVE  
THOUSAND PEOPLE  
I EXPECTED TO FEED  
WILL COME BECAUSE  
OF THE FAST.



DO NOT GRIEVE THE ELDERS  
MAY HAVE TO OBSERVE THE  
FAST BUT BHAIRUN AND  
ARE ONLY CHILDREN WE  
CAN BE EXCUSED FROM

YES,  
WE WILL  
EAT SERVE



AND SO



SIR! SIR! THE  
HOLY YOUNG ONES  
HAVE EATEN ALL  
THE FOOD THERE  
WAS!

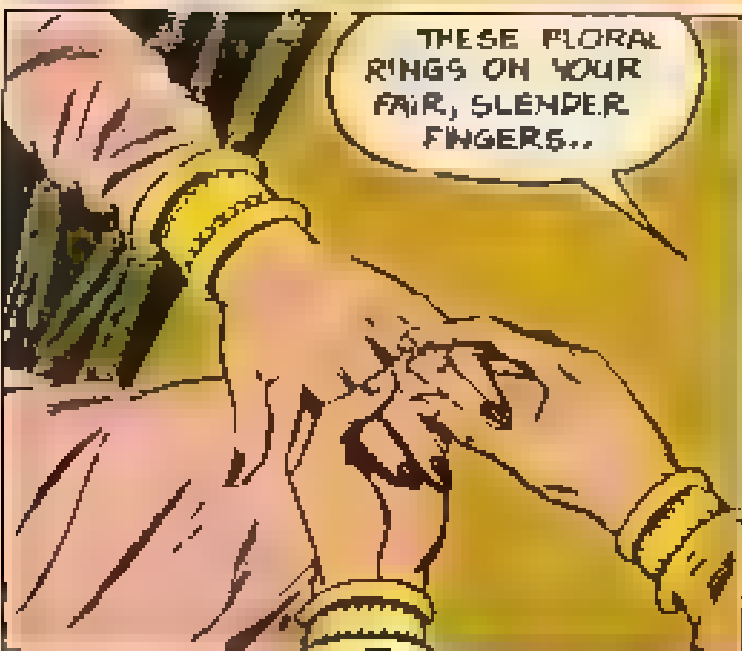
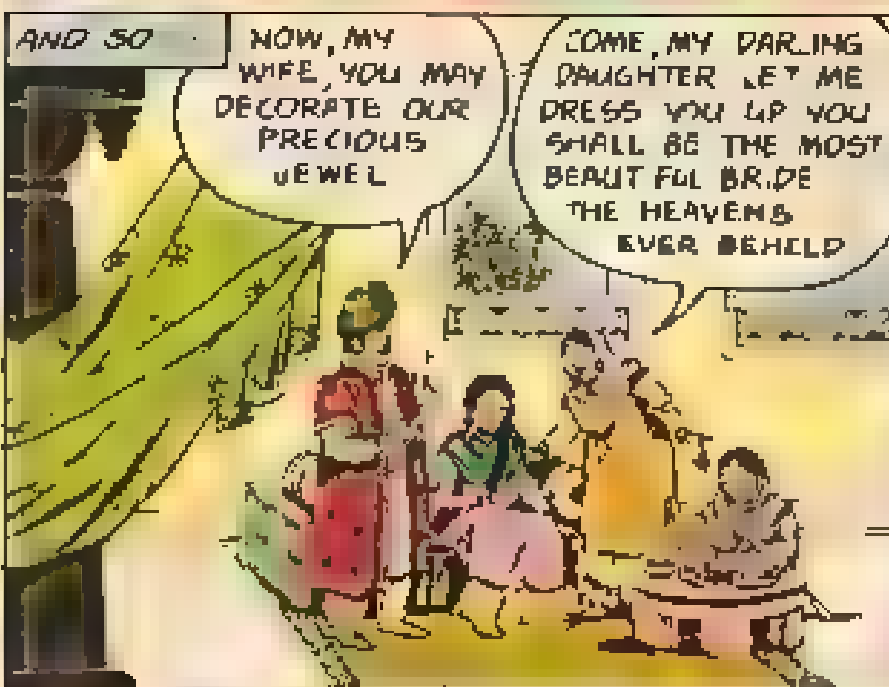
WHAT! FOOD MEANT  
FOR TWENTY-FIVE  
THOUSAND PEOPLE!




I STILL HAVE  
SOME SPACE  
LEFT.

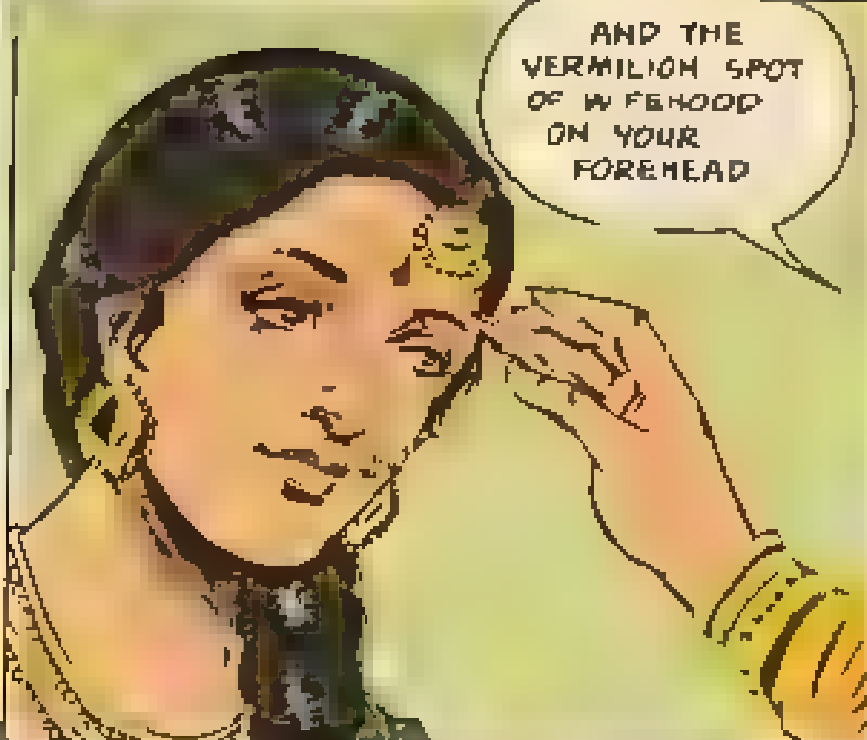
I COULD DO WITH A COUPLE  
OF MORE HELPINGS OF  
SWEETS, PERHAPS.








THIS GOLDEN  
THREAD WITH MOON-  
WHITE PEARLS ON  
YOUR DELICATE  
CHEEK



AND THE  
VERMILION SPOT  
OF WIFEHOOD  
ON YOUR  
FOREHEAD

MEANWHILE -

COME MY SON-IN-  
LAW COMPETE WITH  
ME AND PROVE YOUR  
WORTH LET'S SEE  
WHICH OF US CAN  
SHOOT DOWN THAT  
BRASS CUP BALANC-  
ED ON THE  
SEVEN BAMBOO  
POLES



I'LL TRY  
FIRST



OH I'VE  
MISSED!





O SAKHI, SARWAR, BEFORE  
WE START WE WOULD  
LIKE TO EAT THE SWEET  
PLU FRUIT AND SWEETEN  
OUR MUSIC THE MORE  
FOR YOU

YES, O SAINT,  
GIVE US THE  
PLU FRUIT.



BUT THIS IS NOT THE SEASON  
FOR IT. SEE, THE TREES ARE  
BARE. ASK FOR ANYTHING  
ELSE AND I WILL GRANT  
IT TO YOU.

WE WANT  
THE PLU  
FRUIT



OH MY LORD  
WHAT SHOULD  
I DO ? I DON'T  
WISH TO SEE  
ANYONE UNHAPPY  
ON MY WEDDING  
DAY.



AND SUDDENLY—

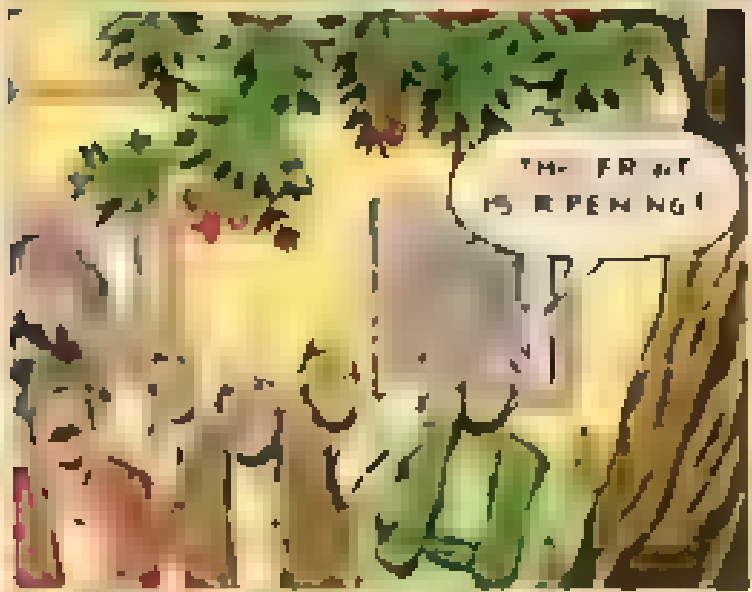
LOOK! THE PLU TREES  
-- LEAVES ARE SPROUT-  
ING ON THEM



THE TREES ARE  
FLOWERING BEFORE  
OUR VERY EYES!



THE FRUIT  
IS RIPENING!



THEY ARE  
JUST RPE  
ENOUGH!



EAT! EAT  
AND BE  
HAPPY!



TODAY IS SAINT  
BATHI SARWAK'S  
WEDDING DAY!

LONG LIVE  
SAINT BATHI  
SARWAK!

THE THREE BROTHERS LEARNED  
THE LESSON AND NEVER AGAIN  
TRICKED SAINT BATHI SARWAK

**Your  
bubble  
of  
happiness!**

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